

STEERING, LEGISLATIVE & GOVERNMENTAL COMMITTEE

September 9, 2015

5:30 p.m.

Courthouse

MINUTES:

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Commissioner Paul Johnson  
Commissioner Allen McAdoo  
Commissioner Robert Peay  
Commissioner Jeff Phillips  
Commissioner Robert Stevens  
Commissioner Brad Turner  
Commissioner Trey Gooch, C

OTHERS PRESENT:

Ernest Burgess      Joe Gourley  
Lisa Duke Crowell      Lisa Nolen  
Sonya Stephenson      Phil Griffin  
Susan Allen      Robert Arnold  
Jim Averwater      Doug Shafer  
John Bratcher      Jeff Sandvig  
Rita Shacklett      Joyce Ealy

Debra Kennedy, Regina Harvey, Veronica Buchanan, Rob Mitchell, Rena Scudder, Stella Duncan, Sheila Todd, Ronald Todd, Diane Mackey, Lynn Duke, Wayne Blair, Becky Shelton

Chairman Gooch presided and called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. with all members being present at that time.

MINUTES:

"Commissioner Turner moved, seconded by Commissioner Phillips, to approve the minutes of the last meeting as mailed. This motion passed unanimously by acclamation."

ANNOUNCE VACANCY ON BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS:

Chairman Gooch advised the position of Joe Crowell on the Board of Zoning Appeals was expiring and accordingly being announced.

Commissioner Phillips advised the BZA has a big job and members need to be qualified to meet certain requirements and wondered if the appointment process could be changed to be done like the Planning Commission where the County Mayor makes the recommendations. Additionally, there are only five members on the BZA and Commissioner Phillips inquired if the Board could be increased to seven. Mayor Burgess advised he would take the matter under advisement and consult with the County Attorney. If it can be changed he will get a report from the County Attorney.

ANNOUNCE TWO VACANCIES ON BEER BOARD:

Chairman Gooch advised the positions of Jared Barrett and Keith Bratcher on the Beer Board were expiring and accordingly being announced.

FILL TWO VACANCIES ON CODES ENFORCEMENT BOARD:

Chairman Gooch advised applications had been received from Francina Kaye Jernigan and James Averwater for appointment to the Codes Enforcement Board. Mr. Averwater was in attendance and addressed the Committee.

"Commissioner Peay moved, seconded by Commissioner Turner, to appoint Francina Kaye Jernigan and James Averwater for appointment to the Codes Enforcement Board and forward the same to the Commission. This motion passed unanimously by acclamation."

FILL FEMALE VACANCY ON LINEBAUGH LIBRARY BOARD TO FILL UNEXPIRED TERM OF NELL BLANKENSHIP:

Chairman Gooch advised applications had been received from Joyce Ealy and Debra Kennedy for appointment to the female vacancy on the Linebaugh Library Board which term expires June, 2017. Both applicants were in attendance and addressed the Committee. The

Committee was advised a letter recommending Joyce Ealy had been received from the Linebaugh Library Board of Directors.

"Commissioner Phillips moved, seconded by Commissioner McAdoo, to nominate both applicants and vote for one. Ms. Ealy will be recommended for appointment to the female vacancy on the Linebaugh Library Board with Commissioners Johnson, McAdoo, Peay, Phillips, Stevens and Gooch voting for Ealy and Commissioner Turner voting for Kennedy."

FILL VACANCY ON STONES RIVER REGIONAL LIBRARY BOARD TO FILL UNEXPIRED TERM OF NELL BLANKENSHIP:

Chairman Gooch advised applications had been received from Phil Griffin and Debra Kennedy for appointment to the Stones River Regional Library Board which term expires June, 2017. Both applicants were in attendance and addressed the Committee.

"Commissioner Peay moved, seconded by Commissioner Turner, to nominate both applicants and vote for one. Mr. Griffin will be recommended for appointment to the vacancy on the Stones River Regional Library Board with Commissioners Johnson, McAdoo, Phillips, Stevens, Turner and Gooch voting for Griffin and Commissioner Peay voting for Kennedy."

ANNOUNCEMENTS FOR SEPTEMBER COMMISSION MEETING:

Chairman Gooch advised the elections of the Chairman Pro Tem and Chaplain were being announced for the September Commission meeting as well as the confirmation of the election of the Commission Chairman.

APPOINTMENT OF JUDICIAL COMMISSIONERS:

Chairman Gooch next advised the Judges of the Rutherford County General Sessions Courts have requested appointment of Casey Brown and Chanta Arnold as judicial commissioners pursuant to the authority contained in Tennessee Public Acts of 1978, Chapter 933, for a term not to exceed four years and such term to conclude and terminate if and when the term is concluded or the service with Rutherford County is terminated. Following discussion,

"Commissioner Phillips moved, seconded by Commissioner Johnson, to recommend appointment of Casey Brown and Chanta Arnold as judicial commissioners for terms not to exceed four years and such terms to conclude and terminate if and when the terms are concluded or the service with Rutherford County is terminated. This motion passed unanimously by acclamation."

RECOMMENDATION FOR 2015-16 STANDING COMMITTEES:

Chairman Gooch provided the proposed 2015-16 Standing Committee recommendations advising the first priority was Commissioner choices and the second was seniority on Committees. All Commissioners received their first choice and eighteen got their second choices. Following discussion,

"Commissioner Turner moved, seconded by Commissioner Stevens, to accept the 2015-16 Standing Committee recommendations as submitted. This motion passed unanimously by acclamation."

RETIREMENT PLAN REVIEW:

HR Director Sonya Stephenson provided information on the current retirement plan and options available for the use and information of the Committee so the Commissioners could develop questions for the TCRS representatives at the November meeting. Ms. Stephenson advised the School Board classified staff and County General are in one plan. Teachers are under the State hybrid plan

specifically for teachers. The Commission has no authority over the teacher plan. Any changes would only be for newly hired employees and does not impact current employees. Ms. Stephenson covered the condition of TCRS and different options available to the County. The Committee was advised there are currently 698 inactive employees receiving the retirement benefit and 1,804 employees that are entitled but not receiving the benefit. Mayor Burgess advised fifteen local governments have made plan changes in the last year and a half.

The Committee was directed to email any questions for the TCRS representatives to Ms. Stephenson. Ms. Stephenson was asked to email her presentation to the Committee.

#### APPOINTMENT OF JUDICIAL COMMISSIONERS:

Chairman Gooch next advised the Judge of the Rutherford County Juvenile Court had requested appointment of Wesley Eke and Preble Acton as judicial commissioners pursuant to the authority contained in Tennessee Public Acts of 1978, Chapter 933, for a term not to exceed four years and such term to conclude and terminate if and when the term is concluded or the service with Rutherford County is terminated. Following discussion,

"Commissioner Phillips moved, seconded by Commissioner Turner, to recommend appointment of Wesley Eke and Preble Acton as judicial commissioners for terms not to exceed four years and such terms to conclude and terminate if and when the terms are concluded or the service with Rutherford County is terminated. This motion passed unanimously by acclamation."

#### IN-STATE COLLEGE TUITION FOR VETERANS:

Commissioner Doug Shafer addressed the Committee regarding in-state tuition for veterans advising the State has passed the Veterans Education Transition Support Act which is basically the same as the government bill but only gives veterans two years from discharge within which to apply for the benefit. Commissioner Shafer was requesting a Resolution for submission to the Rutherford County delegation requesting an extension to fifteen years after discharge within which to apply for the benefit. Many veterans come out of service with post traumatic stress disorder or have lost limbs and two years is a short window of opportunity for the benefit. The Federal Montgomery bill and Post 911 bill provide for tuition fifteen years after discharge and gives thirty-six months to use the same. Commissioner Shafer additionally advised the bill does not provide for out of state veterans that wish to attend a Tennessee school but his main priority is the extension of the time limit on the bill. A Resolution setting forth the request will be presented next month for consideration.

#### ASSESSOR PAY PLAN PRESENTATION:

Assessor Rob Mitchell provided information on how he will be paying employees in his office. Mr. Mitchell advised he is not required to provide the information but wanted to. Mr. Mitchell advised he used the County pay grade but has created some upper level positions. HR Director Stephenson advised under State law Mr. Mitchell can set his wages and he had wanted a lump sum of money to pay employees because he did not want to have his employees on the County general pay scale. The salaries were not approved in the budget process as Mr. Mitchell has taken his employees off the County pay scale. Mr. Mitchell again advised he was just submitting the information to keep the Committee updated. Ms. Stephenson advised she did not know what basis Mr. Mitchell used to place his employees on the scale. Mayor Burgess advised when the employees were on the County pay scale they were not as Mr. Mitchell has them placed now. Ms. Stephenson advised the number of employees are the same and the amount of money approved is the same as last year's.

There appearing to be no further business to come before the Committee, Chairman Gooch declared the meeting adjourned at 7:34 p.m.

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TREY GOOCH, Chairman